A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY,

Occaſioned by his CALM ADDRESS to the *American Colonies.*

Aut ego fallor,
Aut ego lædor.
Quæ mea culpa, tuam, dixit, cariſſime, mentem
Vertit? Ubi eſt, quæ cura mei prius eſſe ſolebat.

OVID.

Manet imperterritus ille
Hoſtem magnanimum opperiens, et mole ſua ſtat.

VIRGIL.

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A LETTER

To the Rev. Mr. *JOHN WESLEY.*

REV. SIR,

THE grand queſtion which is now debated, as you juſtly obſerve, is this, "Has the Engliſh Parliament power to tax the American colonies? Or rather, has it a *right* to tax the colonies—for with reſpect to the POWER *ſub judice lis eſt.*

Your anſwer to this queſtion is very extraordinary indeed; for you not only tell us "that the Engliſh Parliament has an *undoubted right* to tax all the Engliſh colonies" (p. 12. of your addreſs) but roundly aſſert, (p. 21.) that every Sovereign under heaven has a right to tax his ſubjects, that is, to grant their property, with or *without their conſent.*" Which you ſeem to think you ſufficiently explain, by adding, "Our Sovereign has a right to tax me, and all other Engliſhmen, whether we have votes for Parliament-men or no."

And can you then mean it, Sir, as any thing but an inſult to put ſuch a queſtion to the Americans, as you do (p. 22.) "Am I or two millions of Engliſhmen made ſlaves becauſe we are taxed, *without our own conſent?* Yes, Sir, if you *are* taxed without your own conſent, you are ſlaves. If every man that is taxed *without*

his own conſent is not a ſlave, wherein conſiſts the difference betwixt ſlavery and liberty? You ſay to the Americans, (p. 16.) "What civil liberty can you deſire, which you are not already poſſeſſed of? Do not you ſit, without reſtraint, *every man under his own vine?* Do you not, every one, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labour?" But pray, Sir, how can it be his *own vine*, when another claims a right of taking it from him *without his conſent?* Or what man can be aſſured of enjoying the fruits of his labour, if liable, under the colour of right, to be deprived of it, *without his conſent? What property have we*, ſays the immortal LOCKE, *in that which another may by right take when he pleaſes to himſelf?* If this be not the very quinteſſence of ſlavery, what is.

He muſt however be extremely ignorant of the nature of the Engliſh Conſtitution, who does not know that the *granting our own property* and not having it diſpos'd of without our conſent, is conſidered as the very Soul and vital ſpirit of it, the grand palladium of Britiſh Liberty, and the bulwark of freedom.

"*Spiritus intus alit, totamque infuſa per artus*
"*Mens agitat molem, et magno ſe corpore miſcet.*"

I am ſure Sir you need not be informed that in *England* the King or *Sovereign* has nothing to do, ſtrictly ſpeaking, in the matter of taxing his ſubjects, nor the nobility, but *the people alone*, the *Commons* the repreſentatives of the people; who have ever been ſo jealous of this fundamental privilege, that no money bills are ever ſuffered to originate but from themſelves, and when fram'd are never permitted to paſs under the leaſt alteration. And it is this power of *the people* which, in our well-ballanc'd conſtitution, ſerves as an equipoiſe

to

to that power which is lodg'd in the other branches of the legiſlature.

" Were the *executive power*, that is the Sovereign, to determine the raiſing of public money, ſays the celebrated *Monteſquieu*, otherwiſe than by giving it's conſent, (and ſurely you will not call this a *power* of *taxing*) LIBERTY *would be at an end.*"—*Spirit of Laws*, B. II. C. 6.

" Taxation and Repreſentation (ſays that able Lawyer and truly great man Lord *Camden*, in his Speech on this Subject) are inſeparably united. GOD hath joined them: no Britiſh Parliament can ſeparate them: to endeavour to do it is to ſtab our vitals.——My poſition is this—I repeat it—I will maintain it to my laſt hour—TAXATION and REPRESENTATION are inſeparable—this poſition is founded on the laws of nature; it is more, it is itſelf an eternal law of nature; for Whatever is a man's own is abſolutely his own; no man hath a right to take it from him without his conſent either expreſs'd by himſelf or repreſentative; whoever *attempts* to do it, attempts an *injury*; whoever does it, *commits* a ROBBERY; he throws down the diſtinction between LIBERTY and SLAVERY. Taxation and Repreſentation are coeval with and eſſential to this Conſtitution." Did this doctrine ſtand in need of formal proof it were eaſy to refer you to a variety of ancient Statutes which in the moſt expreſs terms recognize this great principle of the Conſtitution. In the time of Edward I. 1297, a Statute was made to confirm the great charter, in which it is expreſsly declared that " *Aids granted to the King ſhall not be taken for a cuſtom, and ſhall not be raiſed* BUT BY CONSENT." And in the year 1306—That " *The King or his heirs ſhall have no aid without conſent of Parliament*," and

that " *nothing ſhall be purvey'd to the King's uſe* WITHOUT THE OWNER'S CONSENT." But you are no ſtranger Sir to theſe and many other authorities of a like nature, having ſeen and read them in a performance you once admired, however you muſt now be ſuppoſed to deſpiſe it. " When the Parliament laid a tax upon the Palatinate of *Cheſter*, ſays Lord *Camden* in the ſpeech before referr'd to, and ordered commiſſioners to collect it there, as commiſſioners were ordered to collect it in other counties, the Palatinate refuſed to comply. They addreſſed the King by petition, ſetting forth that the Engliſh Parliament had no right to tax them; that they had a Parliament of their own; that they had always taxed themſelves, and therefore deſir'd the King to order his commiſſioners not to proceed. The King received the petition, and he did not declare them either rebellious or ſeditious, but allowed them their plea and they taxed themſelves. You may ſee both the petition and the King's anſwer in the Records in the Tower." " There is not, ſays the ſame truly noble Peer, a *blade of graſs*, in the moſt obſcure corner of the kingdom, which is not, which was not ever *repreſented*, ſince the conſtitution began: there is not a *blade of graſs*, which when taxed, *was not taxed by the conſent of the proprietor.*"

To overturn all this reaſoning, you tell us that you have no freehold, and conſequently no vote for a parliament-man; that multitudes beſides are in the ſame ſituation; from whence you infer that the *Sovereign* (and it matters not what meaning you are pleaſed to affix to this word) has a right to tax his ſubjects with or *without their conſent.* See p. 21. of your Addreſs.—And can you Sir conſider this as ſolid argument,

argument, or would not you yourſelf, in any other caſe, look upon it as the moſt contemptible ſophiſtry.

Whether you have or have not a freehold, you muſt either be able to purchaſe one if you chuſe it, or elſe your property muſt be ſo ſmall that it can be of no conſequence to you who has the granting it; eſpecially as they cannot, you know, give away any of your money without at the ſame time giving much more of their own. Forty ſhillings a year freehold gives an Engliſhman a voice in the legiſlature of his country, and in many parts of the kingdom this privilege is extended to every freeman of a corporate town, to every one that pays the rates to King and poor, and not in a few boroughs to every one that boils a pot. Can it then be pretended with any colour of juſtice or reaſon, that in England the *Sovereign* hath a right to tax his ſubjects *without their conſent*, when it is ſo glaringly evident that there is not a man in England who is able to boil a pot in ever ſo deſpicable a hovel, but may, if he pleaſes, have a voice in the diſpoſal of his property. Suppoſe there were ever ſo many millions of Engliſhmen who undervalued their birthright, and did not think it worth their while to exerciſe it, yet ſtill the right itſelf would exiſt, nor could it be ſaid they were taxed *without their conſent*, ſince by not exerting the power the conſtitution gave them of diſſenting, had they been ſo diſpoſed, they implicitly and to all intents and purpoſes *gave their conſent*. And to keep up this power in its full vigour, and to tranſmit it, unimpaired, from generation to generation, you well know, Sir, that parliaments were originally never choſen for more than *one year*, at the expiration of which

term the people again exerciſed their right of election, and thereby made it as clearly appear to be *true*, as you are pleaſed peremptorily to aſſert (p. 5.) it is *abſolutely falſe*, that "every freeman is governed by laws to which he has conſented." It is therefore fallacious to the laſt degree, and unworthy of a man of integrity and candour, to inſinuate as you are pleaſed to do (p. 7.) that the people have "*ceded* to the King and Parliament the power of diſpoſing *without their conſent*, of both their lives, liberties, and properties:" How is it *without their conſent*, when they retain their place in the legiſlature by their repreſentatives, and no act of Parliament is paſſed but *with their conſent?* By the like mode of reaſoning you undertake to prove, (p. 6.) that "when the electors are near equally divided, almoſt half of them muſt be governed not only *without*, but even *againſt their own conſent.*" According to which every act of Parliament that meets with any oppoſition ſhould not be called an act of *Parliament*, but only an act of *part* of the Parliament, ſince it was *againſt the conſent* of many of the members of Parliament. As tho' every man did not know that in all collective bodies the determinations of the *majority* of that body are always conſidered as the determinations of the *whole body*, and that every man who enters into ſociety implicitly *conſents* that it ſhould be ſo. You may call theſe childiſh quirks, Sir, *arguments*; I call them, and ſo, I believe, will every impartial perſon call them mere quibbles. But poſſibly you think to evade the force of criticiſm, by what you afterwards obſerve, (ſpeaking of an implicit *paſſive* conſent to laws made before we were born) namely, "that *any other* than *this kind* of *conſent* the condition of civil life does

does not allow." But if it allows of any *kind of conſent*, why talk of our being taxed *without our conſent*, and *againſt our conſent*, unleſs it be with an artful deſign to enflame your readers minds againſt the Americans, becauſe they object to having their money diſpoſed of *without their own conſent*, that is without the conſent of their repreſentatives in their provincial aſſemblies.

"ALL THE INHABITANTS of the ſeveral diſtricts ought to have, ſays *Monteſquieu* ſpeaking of the Engliſh conſtitution, a right of voting at the election of a repreſentative, excepting ſuch as are in ſo mean a ſituation as to be deemed to have no will of their own."—The *Commons*, ſays Judge *Blackſtone* in his Commentaries on the laws of England B. 1. P. 158. conſiſt of *all ſuch men* of any property in the Kingdom as have not Seats in the Houſe of Lords; EVERY ONE of which has a voice in Parliament either perſonally or by his repreſentative. In a *free State*, EVERY MAN who is ſuppoſed a free agent, *ought* to be in ſome meaſure *his own governor*; and therefore a branch at leaſt of the legiſlative power ſhould reſide in the *whole body of the people*. And this power, when the territories of the ſtate are ſmall and its citizens eaſily known, ſhould be exerciſed by the people in their aggregate or collective capacity. But in ſo large a ſtate as ours is, this would be impoſſible; it is therefore very wiſely contrived, that *the people ſhould do* that by their repreſentatives which it is impracticable to perform in perſon.

But ſo low are your ideas of the power of *the people*, that you challenge any man living (p. 24) to produce any inſtance in all hiſtory wherein *the people* gave the ſovereign power to any one, except to *Maſſaniello* of *Naples*; and I know of

no reaſon for your excepting him, unleſs it was to render as you might think, the old Whig doctrine of the *Origin of power* being from *the people*, the more ridiculous. However, in return to your challenge I aſk you Sir, from whence any Sovereign ever received his power or could receive it, *but from the people*; except you will come boldly forth and avow the old *jure-divino* doctrine; in which caſe we ſhall expect to ſee the CHARTER of Tyranny under the broad ſeal of heaven, and to have the miracles wrought in confirmation of its divine original well authenticated. You will not fail at the ſame time to favour us with the *conſequences* of this doctrine, and to point out to us the man who is OUR KING *de jure*, whoever may be conſidered as our King *de facto*. 'Till this is done we ſhall ſtill conſider the *origin of all power*, under God, to be *the people*, unleſs you will undertake to ſhew that *one man* has more power than a *thouſand men*, and is able to govern them without their own conſent, either expreſſed or implied. What is it, Sir, but a pitiful ſophiſm to deny that any Sovereign, but poor *Maſſaniello*, ever received his power from *the people*, becauſe you know of no other inſtance in which all the people of any particular ſtate or kingdom met together and formally conferred the Sovereign power upon any one. What if only *fifty*, or *twenty* of the Electors of the city of Briſtol had thought proper to have appeared, and actually given their votes for Members of Parliament at the laſt Election? Would not the reſt, by not voting, though they might have done it, be conſidered as having implicitly *conſented* to the choice made by thoſe who actually did vote? And ſo in every change of government, the REVOLUTION particularly, was it not *the people* that, under God,

God, transferred the Sovereign power from King *James*, to that glorious patron of Britiſh liberty King WILLIAM? The many that were inactive at that juncture, implicitly, or *paſſively* (if you like that word better) united with thoſe that were active in bringing about that important event. And however you may play upon the words, and call the uſe of them "*political cant*," *the people*, and the people *only*, are the *ſource of power*; and when Dr. *Smith*, in his ſermon, (p. 31.) talks therefore of the people's *reſuming* the power into their own hands when not exerciſed for the common ſafety, he does not talk of their reſuming, as you ſuggeſt (p. 23.) what they *never had*, but what they *always had*, and *neceſſarily* had, and which no Sovereign on earth *could have* but by *their conſent*. The *army* with us, is a part of *the people*, raiſed from amongſt them, cloathed, fed, and paid by them. In the caſe of *William* the Conqueror, the *Norman people* it is true, were too powerful for the *Saxon* or *Engliſh people*, but how this proves that no Sovereign but *Maſſaniello* ever received his power from *the people*, you have not yet ſhewn us. I ſhall therefore ſtill conſider *the people* as the *origin of power*, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid to the contrary, both in your preſent Addreſs to the Colonies, and in your little piece on the *Origin of* POWER, publiſhed ſome years ago; in which, as I remember, under an artful diſguiſe, you have revived the good old Jacobite doctrine of *hereditary*, *indefeaſible*, *divine right*, and of *paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance*.

And as the origin of power is from the people, ſo no fact can be plainer than that the people of this country never parted with the power of diſpoſing of their own money, but always retained this privilege as a pledge of their conſtituti-

onal freedom, and a glorious mark of their diſtinction from the ſubjects of an arbitrary government, who not having the diſpoſal of their own money, can be conſidered in no other light than that of ſlaves.

And why ſhould we even *wiſh* to deprive of this privilege, our fellow-ſubjects in *America?* You yourſelf acknowledge, that the Coloniſts have not *forfeited* any of their privileges by emigration; but the ſum of your argument to prove the right of the Britiſh Parliament to tax them is this. The Americans by croſſing the ſea, have rendered the *exerciſe* of their right of voting in the Election of Members of Parliament (ſuppoſing they had ſuch a right before their emigration) no *longer poſſible.* But "they have not by abandoning their right in one legiſlature acquired a right to conſtitute another: any more than the multitudes in England who have no votes have a right to erect a parliament for themſelves." That they are therefore reduced (this you intimate is the only conſequence) from the condition of voters to that of the innumerable multitude here in England who have no votes. See pages 8, 9, 10. of your Addreſs. This is your argument, let us weigh it in the balance of ſound impartial reaſon.

If the Americans by croſſing the ſea have rendered it no *longer poſſible* for them to have the diſpoſal of their own money, you cannot ſurely repreſent their caſe as being only parallel to that of thoſe in England who have no votes; it is *fundamentally* different. In *England*, though the people are by no means *equally* repreſented, which is an acknowledged defect in the conſtitution, yet *every man* that has almoſt any degree of property *may* acquire a voice in the legiſlature if he pleaſes, and if he does not, he *conſents* in fact

fact to what is done by others, and cannot therefore with any propriety be ſaid to have his property diſpoſed of *without his conſent*, for he really *gives conſent*. What could he do more if there were a thouſand new parliaments conſtituted? And he may the more eaſily be ſatisfied with *this mode of conſenting* to the diſpoſal of his property, becauſe he has always this ſecurity, that thoſe who take an *active* part in the diſpoſal of his property, muſt at the ſame time diſpoſe of an equal proportion of their own. But not ſo with the American. If he has, not forty ſhillings a year, but forty pounds, or forty thouſand pounds a year—yet ſtill, if the Britiſh Parliament claim the power of taxing him, he can have NO VOICE in the diſpoſal of his property, and which is ſtill worſe, thoſe who are to have the power of diſpoſing of it, are under every poſſible temptation to *abuſe* that power, becauſe every ſhilling they take out of the pocket of an *American* is ſo much ſaved in their own. If the Americans, Sir, are indeed ſubject to ſuch a power as this, their condition differs not from that of the moſt *abject ſlaves* in the univerſe. If their property may be diſpoſed of *without their conſent*, it matters not who diſpoſes of it—the Great MOGUL—the *Grand Monarque*—or the *Britiſh Parliament*—they have no longer any property they can call *their own*, they are SLAVES, and the whole of their property lies at the mercy of thoſe who rule over them.

And is this, Sir, a *neceſſary conſequence* of their becoming Coloniſts? And did they fly from perſecution here, brave the terrors of the ſeas, and tranſplant themſelves into an American wilderneſs, to obtain the poor conſolation of being *neceſſarily* involved in ſlavery, from the very circumſtances of their ſituation? Who

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can ſoberly entertain ſuch a thought. No, Sir, their ſupport under all the fatigues they bore, was the hope of enjoying unmoleſted the ſweets of liberty, or, as you expreſs it, of *ſitting every man under his own vine.* "*They left their native country,* ſays Mr. *Hutchinſon,* with the *ſtrongeſt aſſurances,* that they and their poſterity, ſhould enjoy the privileges of *free* and natural-born Engliſh ſubjects." "The Americans," as Lord *Chatham* expreſſes it, "are the SONS, not the BASTARDS, of England." "The foreſathers of the Americans, to uſe the words of Lord *Camden,* did not leave their native country, and ſubject themſelves to every danger and diſtreſs, to be reduced to a ſtate of SLAVERY. They did not give up their rights: they looked for protection and not for CHAINS from their Mother Country."

But you inſiſt upon it, that by croſſing the ſea, though they did not *give up* nor *forfeit* any of their rights, they rendered the exerciſe of ſome of them *no longer poſſible.* True, *it is no longer poſſible,* that they ſhould vote for Members of the Britiſh Parliament, conſequently *no longer poſſible* they ſhould be *repreſented* in the Britiſh Parliament, and therefore *no longer poſſible*——that the Britiſh Parliament ſhould diſpoſe of their property *without their conſent,* by their own repreſentatives in their reſpective houſes of aſſembly,—without involving them in *abſolute ſlavery.*

And *muſt* they be SLAVES, is it *no longer poſſible* that they ſhould exerciſe the right of FREEMEN, that they ſhould have parliaments or aſſemblies of their own, and grant their own money by their repreſentatives as we do by ours here; becauſe the Atlantic ocean rolls betwixt us and them? You ſay, they have no right to

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conſtitute another legiſlature; but why then were they from the very beginning of their exiſtence permitted to form a legiſlative body, the *effigies parva*, as Mr. *Hutchinſon* ſtiles it, of the mother ſtate? The COMMONS of *America*, Sir, repreſented in their ſeveral aſſemblies, (to uſe the expreſſions of Lord *Chatham*) have *ever been in poſſeſſion* of the exerciſe of this their conſtitutional right, of *giving* and *granting* their OWN MONEY. *They would have been* SLAVES *if they had not enjoyed it.* "The idea of a *virtual* repreſentation of *America* in this houſe, (ſays his Lordſhip, who was then a Commoner) is the moſt contemptible idea that ever entered into the head of man. It does not deſerve a ſerious refutation.

But if the Coloniſts contend for the exerciſe of this right of granting their own money, you aſſert (p. 20.) in your uſual dogmatic ſtyle, "they contend for neither more nor leſs than independency." And immediately add, "Why then do they talk of their *rightful Sovereign?* They acknowledge no Sovereign at all." To which I anſwer, in the words of the judicious and truly diſpaſſionate author of *An Argument in Defence of the Colonies*, &c. p. 112.

"We need not, ſays this author, go ſo far back as the act of union to find a people that will not allow the *ſupreme legiſlature* of *Great Britain*, to alter a *ſingle letter* in a law to *tax them*; and yet are no more *independent* than the people of the Colonies. IRELAND is ſubject to the ſame Sovereign as *America*. The people in *Ireland* chooſe their own repreſentatives, ſo do the people in the Colonies. The people in *Ireland* are taxed by their own repreſentatives, ſo have the people in the Colonies been *ever ſince their firſt ſettlement*. The crown appoints the

Lord

Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*—the crown appoints the Governors of the Colonies. The Lord Lieutenant calls the meeting of the legiſlative body in *Ireland*. In the Colonies, the Governor calls an Aſſembly when he thinks proper, and adjourns, prorogues and diſſolves it at his pleaſure. The Iriſh acts are ſent over to be allowed (not by the Britiſh Parliament, but) *by the crown*. The acts of the Colonies are the ſame. The repreſentatives choſen by the people of *Ireland*, will ſuffer no duties to be collected from the people, but ſuch as they grant themſelves. And the repreſentatives choſen by the people in the Colonies *claim the ſame right*."

Why then do you not aſk the Iriſh, "Why they talk of their rightful Sovereign," and tell them "they acknowledge no ſovereign at all"—becauſe they claim a right of granting their own money. Your argument holds as good with reſpect to *Ireland* as ever it can with reſpect to the colonies: and why the *Coloniſts* ſhould not be permitted to have the diſpoſal of their own money as well as the *Iriſh* of theirs, without ſuppoſing they contend for *independency* (which they ſolemnly diſclaim) and without being told they acknowledge *no Sovereign at all*, I am ſure it is paſt the art even of Mr. *Weſley*'s logic to ſhew us. (As much as it is for the Middleſex Juſtices (ſee their late curious Addreſs,) to ſhew us how the colonies are courting the King *to accept of* ABSOLUTE POWER, by claiming it as their undoubted right to diſpoſe of their own property by their own repreſentatives. Theſe Juſtices ſeem to have miſtaken the claims of the colonies, for the powers *actually granted and accepted* by the Quebec bill.)

But you intimate to us that the Coloniſts have implicitly *engaged* to ſubmit to the taxation of the

the Britiſh Parliament, by the very letter as well as ſpirit of their *charters*. But how does this appear? The Coloniſts with one voice declare the contrary, in the moſt expreſs and ſolemn manner. And Mr. *Hutchinſon*, one of their late Governors, (who will not be ſuſpected of partiality to them,) declares, as I have before obſerved (ſee the preface to his hiſtory of Maſſachuſets-Bay, publiſhed 1760.) "*They left their native country with the* STRONGEST ASSURANCES *that they and* THEIR POSTERITY *ſhould enjoy the privileges of free and natural-born Engliſh ſubjects.*" But how could they enjoy theſe privileges, if the firſt and faireſt of them all, the right of *granting their own money*, was to be no longer enjoyed by them. How could they enjoy the privileges of Engliſhmen, if by their charters they were to be ſlaves? How could they enjoy the privilege of *freedom*, if from the very nature of *ſubordinate government*, as you ſuggeſt, p. 11, they are neceſſarily involved in ſlavery.

"The charter of Pennſylvania, you tell us, has a clauſe admitting in expreſs terms taxation by Parliament. And, if ſuch a clauſe be not inſerted in other charters, it muſt be omitted, you obſerve, as not neceſſary; becauſe it is manifeſtly implied in the very nature of ſubordinate government: all countries which are ſubject to laws, being liable *to taxes*." (To make your argument hold good here, you ſhould have added, *without repreſentatives*, for the Coloniſts have *always* been *taxed*, only it has been by *their* repreſentatives.)

"It is true, you further obſerve, the firſt ſettlers in *Maſſachuſets-Bay* were promiſed an *exemption from taxes for ſeven years*. But, ſay you immediately,

immediately, does not this very exemption imply, that they were to pay them afterwards?"

To all this I reply, that as to the exemption from *taxes* for ſeven years promiſed to the Maſſachuſets colony, I am credibly informed it has no reference at all to what we commonly mean by *taxes*, but *quit-rents* for the land occupied by them, an exemption from the payment of which for a certain number of years is commonly granted to the firſtſettlers in every new colony. Were we to ſuppoſe it to refer to an exemption from parliamentary taxation, we might well aſk you Sir, upon your own principles, what right had *the King* to promiſe by Charter, that *the Parliament* ſhould *not tax* them for ſeven years. If, as you ſay, the Parliament always had this power of taxation over the Colonies, *the King* could not promiſe any more than you or I could, that the Parliament ſhould not exerciſe this power *for ſeven years*.——And with reſpect to *Pennſylvania*, whatever conſtruction the clauſe you refer to may bear, that it was *never underſtood* to mean what you ſuppoſe, a power of internal taxation for the purpoſe of raiſing a revenue, but merely the laying on of ſuch duties as might be neceſſary ſolely for the *regulation* of trade, is evident from this ſimple fact. *No ſuch taxation was impoſed* upon the colonies till the fatal æra of the ſtamp-act, and it was then univerſally reprobated by the Coloniſts as an *innovation* and a fundamental breach of their *chartered* as well as inherent rights.

And may we not aſk with wonder, If Parliament always poſſeſſed this power of taxing the Colonies, or however judged it conſiſtent with the ſpirit of the Engliſh Conſtitution to exerciſe this power, why did they uniformly thro' a courſe of perhaps one hundred and fifty years permit the Coloniſts to tax themſelves, by their own Repreſentatives, in their own Aſſemblies?

And

And having been ſo long *in poſſeſſion* of this right of granting their own money, have they ever forfeited it by an abuſe of it? Not ſurely in the late war; for tho' this war was *not undertaken*, as you aſſert, on their account, but in defence of the new plantation of *Nova-Scotia*; (the inhabitants of which have no concern in the preſent diſpute,) yet it is well known to all the world, that the Coloniſts exerted themſelves in this war even *beyond their power*, ſo that the King and Parliament judged it reaſonable to make LARGE REIMBURSEMENTS to them at the cloſe of the war. "They themſelves, as Dr. *Smith* expreſſes it in his truly patriotic Sermon, (p. 20.) teſtified on our behalf, that in all things we not only did our part but *more* than our part for the common good, and they diſmiſſed us home loaded with ſilver and with gold, in recompence for our extraordinary ſervices." A fact this, which miniſterial writers *never attend to*, but *cannot deny*. And yet you are pleaſed to talk of the *Mother Country*'s deſiring to be *reimburſed* for ſome part of the large expence ſhe had been at in the late war, and that to this end ſhe laid a ſmall tax on one of her colonies." I wiſh Sir, you would diſcover more fairneſs and ingenuity in your repreſentations.

Beſides, do we not poſſeſs a MONOPOLY of the American trade; and is there not hereby an *immenſe revenue* ſecured to us? "When I had the honor of ſerving his Majeſty, (ſays Mr. Pitt, now Lord Chatham,) I availed myſelf of the means of information which I derived from my office: I SPEAK THEREFORE FROM KNOWLEDGE. My materials were good. I was at pains to *collect*, to *digeſt*, to *conſider* them; and I *will be bold to affirm*, that the profit to Great-Britain from the trade of the Colonies, through

all

all its branches, is TWO MILLIONS A YEAR. *This* is the fund that carried you triumphantly through the laſt war. The eſtates that were rented at two thouſand pounds a year, threeſcore years ago, are at three thouſand pounds at preſent. Thoſe eſtates ſold then from fifteen to eighteen years purchaſe; the ſame may be ſold now for thirty. YOU OWE THIS TO AMERICA. THIS IS THE PRICE AMERICA PAYS YOU FOR HER PROTECTION."

Upon the whole Sir, I cannot more fully expreſs my ſentiments on this ſubject, or more deciſively, than in the words of the author of "the Defence of the Colonies," &c. before quoted, which are (p. 91, 92.) as follows.

"If the people in America are *taxed* and not *repreſented*, their rights as ſubjects under the Engliſh conſtitution are as clearly invaded as they were in the caſe of *ſhip-money*; and the province of *Maſſachuſets-Bay* now ſtands in the ſame ſituation, in behalf of the rights of the people of *America*, as Mr. *John Hamden* did for all the people of England in the laſt century. I am as much for the obedience of the people in America as I can be againſt their illegal oppreſſion. I would wiſh to be as far from wilfully ſhutting my eyes, and thinking all the people of the colonies faultleſs, as I would be to give up my reaſon, and believe thoſe *incapable of miſtake* who exclaim ſo much againſt them. I am equally afraid of being miſled in the miſts that are raiſed by violence or intereſt on either ſide of the queſtion. I contend not for men's prejudices. It is the rights of my fellow-ſubjects in *America* that I only mean to defend: and thoſe rights not ſuch as are of vague and uncertain interpretation, but ſuch as the Engliſh conſtitution makes the *unalterable property* of *every man* that lives under the protection of its laws. And if the

the people of *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, or *America* are ever to be taxed *without* having, or the poſſibility of having, *any choice* in thoſe that impoſe the taxes upon them, they are no longer the ſubjects but the *ſlaves* of government. Our conſtitution as eſtabliſhed by the laws, is utterly repugnant to every attempt to divide the *right of taxation* from the *privilege of repreſentation*. And could any pretence ever juſtify the ſeparation of thoſe rights with *a part of the ſubjects*, the ſame reaſons would hold good *with the whole*. Theſe are rights ſo eſſential to our conſtitution, that they make a part of the rules by which the *legiſlature itſelf is bound* to walk. And it can no more take away the proviſion the conſtitution has made for the ſecurity of THE PEOPLE'S PROPERTY, than it can THE PRIVILEGES OF THE PEERS, or THE KNOWN PREROGATIVE OF THE CROWN."

Your account of the ORIGINAL CAUSE of all our diſputes and diſturbances about American affairs, is curious.

You tell us with a grave face that *you make no doubt* (p. 14.) but that *a few men in England* who are determined enemies to monarchy, are *the original cauſe* of the preſent breach between England and her colonies. That theſe good men *cordially hate* the King, at leaſt his office, and are in hopes of overturning the government, and erecting their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon the ruins of it. You doubt (p. 18.) whether any of the *Americans* are in the ſecret. The deſigning men, the *Ahitophels* are in England.

But the Americans, Sir, if we may judge of their diſpoſitions, by that of the *Pennſylvanian Farmer*, will not thank you for your compliment. "It has been ſaid in Great-Britain" ſays this *Cato* of *America*, (ſee his Eſſay, p. 26.) "that Lord *Chatham*,

Chatham, Lord *Camden*, and ſome other great men have taught the colonies to deſpiſe her authority. But it is as little true as the multitude of invectives vented againſt the colonies. The conſtant practice in theſe publications, is to confound facts and dates, and then *to rail*. It ſhould be remembered, that the oppoſition in America to the ſtamp-act was *fully-formed*, and the congreſs held at *New-York*, *before it was known* on the Continent, that our cauſe was *eſpouſed* by ANY MAN OF NOTE at home."

The oppoſition to the meaſures of the miniſtry reſpecting America, you will have it, however, is owing to theſe bad men, theſe *King-haters* you are ſo intimate with. For it ſeems, tho' they have let but *few* into the ſecret, the Rev. Mr. *Weſley* is one of that choſen few. Well, Sir, this ſerves to explain a matter which, I aſſure you, till now puzzled me not a little.

All the world knows that in your "*Free Thoughts on Public affairs*," publiſhed 1770, you were pleaſed to ſay, (p. 14.) "*I do not defend the meaſures taken with regard to* AMERICA, I doubt whether ~~ANY~~ MAN can defend them, either on the foot of LAW, EQUITY, or PRUDENCE." And it is well known, that you recommended the book I have repeatedly quoted in this letter, intitled; "*An Argument in defence of the excluſive right claimed by the colonies to tax themſelves*," as a performance that would convince *any impartial perſon* of the juſtice of the American cauſe. It is moreover well known, that at the time of our late election, and many times ſince, you expreſſed yourſelf *very warmly* in different companies, and upon different occaſions, in *favour* of the Americans, affirming that they were in your opinion, an "*oppreſſed, injured people*," that if they ſubmitted to taxation by our Parliament, they "*muſt* be

e either FOOLS or KNAVES," that they would ıen be *enſlav'd*, and if they were once enſlav'd, *reland* would follow next, and then *England*. 'hat you wiſh'd well to our late American can- idate *becauſe* he was *a friend to America*, and hen addreſſing the electors of your own ſociety, old them, with no ſmall degree of vehemence, ıat now was the time for them to exert them- elves if they wiſhed to continue a free people; r words to that effect.—Now really, Sir, I ıought you had been *in earneſt*, and *meant* as ou ſaid when you expreſſed yourſelf in this ıanner, and have taken pleaſure in aſſuring ıany perſons who were not over-well affected o you, that you was a hearty friend to civil nd religious liberty. I beg pardon for miſre- reſenting you, Sir, I perceive now that all our deſign was to get into the confidence of heſe bad men, theſe *King-haters* you talk of, nd ſo by a *pious fraud* to blow up their abomi- ıable ſchemes. I perceive now, that when you aid the *Americans* were an *oppreſſed and injured eople*, you *meant* the very reverſe. When you *aid* that if they ſubmitted to parliamentary axation they would be *enſlaved*, and muſt be either *fools* or *knaves*, you *meant* no ſuch thing; ut that "*they* would ſtill have *all the liberty* hey could deſire, and might *ſtill rejoice in the ommon rights of* FREEMEN (p. 16, and 22. of your Addreſs) and ſit without reſtraint, *every man nder his own vine*.— And yet perhaps, I am ſtill miſtaken in your meaning; for your next publi- cation may be as much in *favour* of the Americans as the preſent is againſt them, and poſſibly you may diſcloſe to our view *another ſett of Ahito- phels* who are plotting the deſtruction of the preſent royal family, by firſt endeavouring to puſh on the miniſtry to the exerciſe of arbitrary power, and when it is become indifferent to the

people

people what King rules over them, then, by the revival of the good old doctrine of *hereditary indefeasible* right, making a grand effort for the reſtoration of the baniſhed family of the STUARTS, of *bleſſed memory*.

" *Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo?*"

For my own part, I am in no ſecret. I love, I honor the King, have been taught from my very infancy to venerate him almoſt to idolatry, and am ready cheerfully to ſacrifice my fortune and my life, in defence of his Royal Perſon, and the Conſtitution of which he is the guardian. I love and honor *all good men*, all men of real principle and INTEGRITY, however they may differ from me in political or religious ſentiments; nor can any wiſh glow in my heart more fervently, than that which I have long panted to ſee accompliſhed—which is—That a permanent peace and reconciliation may ſpeedily take place betwixt us and our American Colonies, upon an honorable conſtitutional baſis, and that our beloved Sovereign GEORGE the Third, may long live to ſway the ſceptre over an *united*, *harmonious*, *free* people.

Hoping, Sir, for the ſake of the multitudes that follow you, that you will be more *ſteady* and *conſiſtent* as a *Divine* than, I am ſure, you are as a *Politician*; and that when you publiſh again upon politics, you will not, under the idea of a *Calm Addreſs to the Colonies*, (the inhabitants of which will probably *never ſee* your Addreſs,) endeavor to inflame the minds of the people here againſt their American Brethren, (already ſufficiently expoſed, ſurely, to the reſentment of their Rulers,) but that you will write in a ſtrain more becoming a miniſter of the Prince of PEACE,—I ſubſcribe myſelf,

Reverend Sir, your ſincere Well-wiſher,
And humble Servant,

BRISTOL,
Oct. 2, 1775.

Americanus.

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